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THE I OF MOVEMENT  
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by

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..

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Physical education deals directly with human movement. Human movement ranges from barely perceivable gestures to easily observable activity. One of the concerns of physical educators is efficient human movement. Physical educators help individuals work towards efficient human movement patterns. In their concern about the human movement phenomena, an individual's motoric behavior is viewed as the essence of being.

Some of the current writings (Gerber, 1972; Harper, 1969; Coutts, 1968; Slusher, 1967) concerned with the phenomenon of human movement deal mostly with play, game, sport, and athletics, and involve subjective analyses of these modes of behavior. The analyses written from the authors' experiences allow the readers to draw their own meaning. Because each reader is individually editing the readings, it is important that the concepts presented be lucid and the frame of reference be established by the author. In this study, "The I of Movement", the movement concept the author will be speaking about refers to human movement forms which are of individual volition. These movement patterns are beyond the necessary movement patterns for sustenance of life, such as breathing, swallowing or eye blinking. In

addition, those "everyday tasks" which depend upon specific movement patterns are of minimal concern. The movement forms which are of concern are those in which an individual seeks to participate. They are sought because they are assumed to be enjoyable, and thus as phenomena they are special.

The concept of the "I" of movement patterns focuses on a state of being in which the individual is completely absorbed in the movement pattern. Individuals are not attentive to the everyday occurrences when they are engaged in the "I" of movement. In the "I", they are concentrating only on the movement. The concept of concentrating and being totally absorbed in movement does not mean that the movement is unreal, or irrelevant to the real world. Being absorbed in a movement pattern allows an individual to concentrate fully on the experience. The individual is definitely within reality, and in fact is coping with or challenging the demands of reality; he/she is taking the bull by the horns (reality) and saying, "Although you have horns, I still have myself with which I can exist in your arena." The "I" of movement is a self-renewing, self-projecting, self-creating, and self-indulging activity which exists within reality. The self-projections and self-creations help maintain contact with reality because of the individual's awareness of their projections and creations. Gerber (1972) affirmed this belief about movement in sport



and games when she stated, "...sport and play are real by any measure. They have perceptual reality to the participant and spectator [p. 69]."

The concept of total absorption of an individual's attention through play, game, sport, and athletics has been noted by a number of scholars. Huizinga (1950) recognized the absorption in play when he stated, "This intensity of, and absorption in, play finds no explanation in biological analysis [p. 2]."

Schmitz (1972) spoke about sport and play as a suspension of the ordinary. "Through it [play] arises the suspension of the ordinary concerns of the everyday world [p. 28]." He referred to suspension of the everyday concerns as a dethroning of their primacy to the play phenomenon. This suggests that play can be at times more important than everyday happenings.

Ulrich (1968) in speaking about society's play heritage stated, "To the extent that man is nourished by play, he can find relief from the reality that is life. He can, for a time, put aside the harsh insistence of essentials and necessities and turn to the ideal construction of a world which suggests order, equity, and perfection [p. 99]." The idea of constructing a world of order, equity, and perfection through play is one way of answering the challenges a non-ordered world has yet to handle.

Lawther (1972) referred to sport when he spoke of absorption in a movement activity:

"...if one wants and needs to forget everything else while he is absorbed in sport, he seems to succeed better if he strives for what is for him a high level of personal performance [p. 3]."

Since the level of personal performance is dependent upon the individual, it is possible for a participant who appears to be of low motor ability to be absorbed.

Harper (1969) stated:

"Whether he is hurling a javelin, soaring off a ski jump, performing a double back flip off a diving board, or streaming towards earth in a free fall sky dive, man is alone. He is beyond the world of public determinations; of official identities; of function; of self-deceptions; and of everydayness [p. 60]."

Sheets, Kleinman and Studer have identified this concept of total absorption with specific terminology.

Studer (1974), using the term "The Moment" indicated:

"the characteristic of the moment as it is experienced in movement is not one of gain or loss of goal, but of involvement, and immersion into the world [p. 3]."

Sheets (1966) and Kleinman (1971) used the term "lived experience" and "lived moment" respectively. Sheets in referring to lived experience indicated:

"We are spontaneously and wholly intent upon the continuously emerging form which appears before us, thoroughly engrossed in its unfolding [p. 4]."

Kleiman spoke about the lived moment and asked:

"What constitutes the fascination with, and the competitive challenge of, physical activity is the question with which we ought to be dealing [p. 64]."

Whether it be play in game, sport, or athletics through a lived moment, experience, or moment, man has the potential to become involved completely in the activity. This complete absorption in an activity, or "The I of Movement", enables an individual to know that "I am me, and can be no other." Therefore, "The I of Movement" is the individual, and the observer of the individual creates an I of Movement for self.

## CHAPTER II

### FORMAT OF INQUIRY

Research within the frame of reference of phenomenology is relatively new. Research in this philosophical domain is difficult because the exact structure of phenomenology is yet to be discerned. As Kleinman (1971) stated, "...I have come to the conclusion that there are phenomenologies and there are phenomenologies [p. 73]." The nature of phenomenology has been espoused by Edmund Husserl, Martin Heidegger, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, and Jean-Paul Sartre. Phenomenologists are significantly different in their viewpoint. The only common element, if there is one, "is the exhortation to look and see, take up and immerse oneself in what is there [p. 73]." There seems to be a common agreement on the primacy of a subjective experience. In "The I of Movement" philosophical concern was based on the ideas of phenomenology held by Heidegger.

In Heideggerian phenomenology if one is to grasp the true nature of things, he/she must undertake a careful analysis of the umwelt, mitwelt, and eigenwelt of the Dasein (Schacht, 1972). In other words, humans must undertake an investigation into their relationship with the environment, fellow humans and the self. The first aspect of Heideggerian phenomenology suggests a description of an observable state of affairs.

Schacht (1972) indicated the next step would include "...the determination of the fundamental structures of the entities in question, by means of a kind of transcendental 'interpretation' [p. 309]." Persons during this stage of phenomenology would search for and retain only those immediate structures necessary for the existence of the phenomena. Thus, interpretation of the events, structures, and circumstances are limited to the individual's focus.

The last phase as stated by Schacht (1972) is "...subjecting the structures which first come to light to a similar 'interpretation', if and when this is possible [p. 311]." One would try to experience the phenomena again and again to give support to the structures necessary for the existence of the phenomena.

The rationale for the Heideggerian phenomenology stems from his belief that phenomenologists must begin with things as they are experienced. One must describe in a different way that which is real. Edmund Husserl, a phenomenologist, believed that one must transcend the 'natural standpoint' and with it suspend the concern for human existence and the world as they are experienced (Schacht, 1972). In "The I of Movement" it is believed that movement should be viewed as real with respect to the rest of the world. Heideggerian phenomenology supports such a contention and was selected as the author's frame of reference.

### CHAPTER III

#### PROCEDURES

The application of the phenomenological method as used by Martin Heidegger can lead to depicting movement patterns in which an individual is totally absorbed. Inherent in this study were the following assumptions:

1. The phenomenological method, as discussed by Martin Heidegger, is applicable to movement patterns, or activities.
2. Movement patterns may present to the observer a feeling of total involvement of the participant.
3. Photography, poetry, prose and verse can be used to communicate feelings.

The procedures involved in this study include the selection of movement patterns and activities, phenomenological inquiry into the movement activities, and the descriptive techniques of pictures, prose, poetry and verse.

#### SELECTION OF MOVEMENT PATTERNS

The scope of this study consisted of the author's investigation of movement activities and patterns. The movements depicted in the photographic data had no



boundaries other than those arbitrarily accepted by the investigator and sponsored by the participant. Whatever human movement existed was a potential source of data for the investigator.

### PHENOMENOLOGICAL INQUIRY

This philosophical investigation proceeded from an initial concern of a way to examine mankind's process of self-discovery to the development of the author's interpretation of movement activities or patterns in which there seemed to be total absorption, and which sponsored a phenomenon that had meaning to the author.

Using Heidegger's phenomenological method, (description of experience, interpretation of basic structures and subjection of structures of similar experiences), the author utilized photography, poetry, prose, and verse for her description of experiences.

After the collection of the pictures and writings the author investigated each picture and writing for a common element. The concept of total absorption in movement patterns and activities was derived from this inquiry. The author then sought to elaborate this concept by asking the following questions:

1. Why is it possible for one to become totally absorbed in movement patterns and activities; is there an I of movement?

2. What is the nature of the I of movement?
3. How does one achieve the I of movement?
4. What is the state of the I of movement like?

The final stage of Heideggerian phenomenology was implemented when the investigator utilized more than one picture and writing to present the concept of total absorption. It should be noted that although the author found only one common element in all of the movement activities (idea of total absorption), there are undoubtedly other characteristics which might possibly appear semi-consistently, or that are derivatives of the total absorption concept.

#### DESCRIPTIVE TECHNIQUES

A 35-mm single lens reflex camera was used to photograph movement activities. Various techniques such as cut-outs, double exposures and dodging were used to enhance both the writings and the pictures. The author experimented with different types of papers and films. Pastel papers, paper finish and paper grade were among those tested. The selection of paper type was made in accordance with each negative. Both color and black-and-white film were used in the pre-stages of data gathering. Black-and-white was finally selected because it was financially practical and because of the author's experience



in the processing of black-and-white prints. Tri-X, Plus-X, and infra-red film were the film types selected.

Some of the photographs were pre-arranged in time and design. Others were gathered when the investigator encountered movement patterns and activities already in progress. The pictures, poetry, prose, and verse were used to complement each other and create a whole feeling and idea. At times the pictures inspired the writings and at other times the reverse was true. The exact choice of which pictures and writings would be included was left up to the investigator. However, two constant sources, Dr. Celeste Ulrich and Ms. Elsa Heimerer were used in the evaluation of the pictures and writings. Dr. Celeste Ulrich has accumulated twenty-eight years as an advisor and teacher; and Ms. Elsa Heimerer is coordinator of audio-visual materials in the physical education department of The University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Both individuals have had experience in the evaluation of pictures and creative writings. After all the pictures and writings were chosen and evaluated the final product was assimilated into an organized meaningful whole.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE I OF MOVEMENT

The question of what is human nature is asked by a person in order to understand how it is that one can become absorbed totally in movement activities. What is it within a person that allows such total devotion for a period of time? The answers may be drawn from ideas about personality, theories regarding the cause of play, and philosophical speculations. Some individuals have questioned the meaning of human personality, some theories have postulated about the meaning of activity to individuals, some philosophers have advanced ideas regarding the human equation.

Maslow (1972) claimed that the primary motivating force in mankind is to achieve self-actualization, a state of being which is free from defenses, and characterized by individual autonomy, creativeness, and devotion to a cause. The theory of play as compensation stated that psychic needs which are not satisfied through work will be satisfied through play (Ellis, 1973).

Because there are many answers to the question of what is man, there seems to be no one answer. Scheler acknowledged this fact when he said:

"The ever-growing multiplicity of the particular sciences that are engaged in the study of man has much confused and obscured our concept of man [p. 22]."

With many divergent answers, perhaps the question, "What is human nature?" can only be answered when an individual asks "What is my nature?" One might contend that there is a danger in narrowing the question this way. Am I to know mankind if I only know me? The individual can only begin to know mankind by knowing himself. Buber (1955) suggested this when he concluded:

"Philosophical knowledge of man is essentially man's self-reflection (selbstbesinnung), and man can reflect about himself only when the cognizing person, that is, the philosopher pursuing anthropology, first of all reflects about himself as a person [p. 124]."

"What is my nature," is an individual question; but when many individualized questions are answered, generalizations may be drawn. It is possible then that generalizations exist in an individual's responses. What is human nature can be discussed in terms of the aspect of self which allows a person to become absorbed totally in movement patterns.

Human beings are continually using movement patterns beyond the generic forms of walking, running, jumping and crawling. These patterns are both ordinative and creative and are structured in terms of rules, boundaries, human potential and limitations volitionally set by the individuals. These patterns are meaningful to the movers. In such patterns there may be total absorption or casual performance. When the individual is totally absorbed, it is possible that the creative aspects of human nature are paramount.

I am an individual. I am a person. When I am totally absorbed in a movement pattern I am creating. Creativeness is a characteristic of me as a person. Messenbrink (1971) stated that there is no single definition for creativity; it can be understood through the personality of the creator, the creative process, and the products of the creator. As I enter into the movement patterns I am anticipating total sensations. The creative process is me; it is my movements, thoughts and feelings. The product is the joy, the exultations of my movements, my patterns. Maslow (1972) spoke of the inspirational phase of the creative furor as a phase in which the creative individual loses his past and future and lives only in the moment.

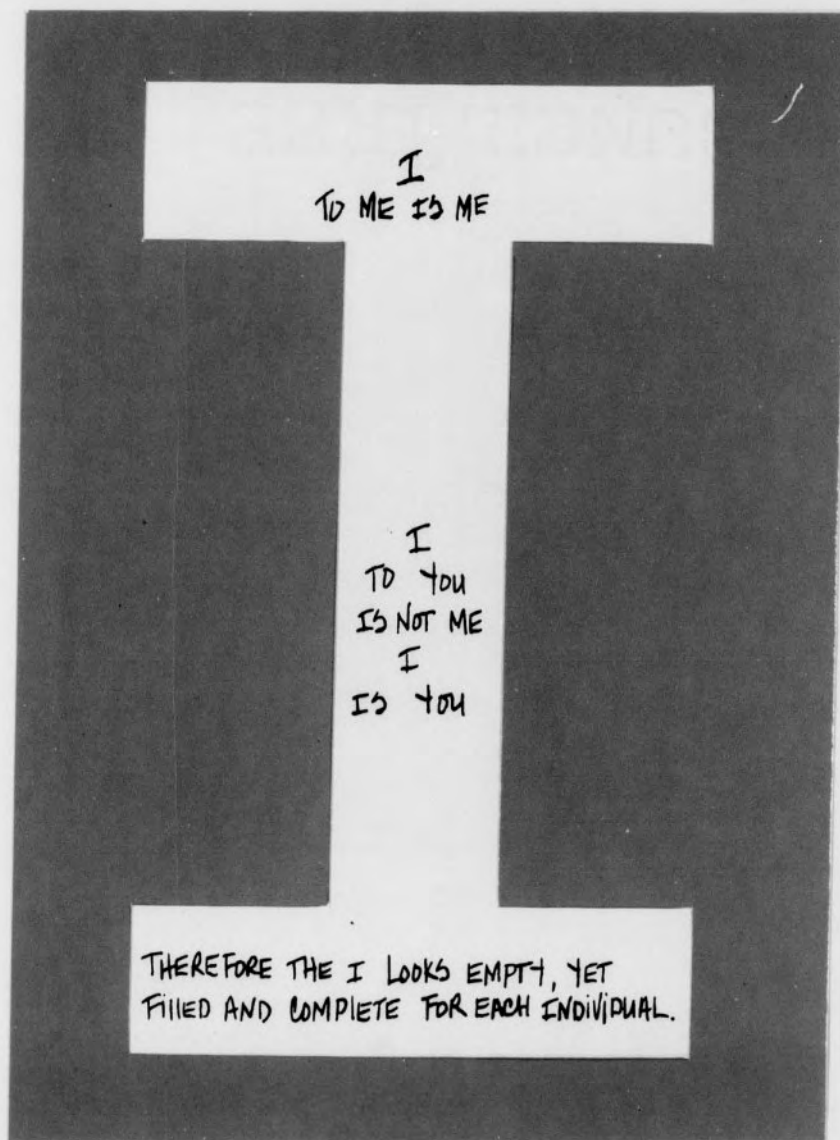
"He is all there, totally immersed, fascinated and absorbed in the present, in the current situation, in the here-now, with the matter-in-hand....This ability to become 'lost in the present' seems to be a sine qua non for creativeness of any kind p. 61."

Brown and Gaynor (1967) added a needed dimension when they discussed creativity in movements such as play, games, sport, and athletics. They suggested that the creative process is in operation when an individual is moving. They supported the idea of total absorption by suggesting that when the creative individual is involved in an athletic contest, one can become immersed in the intricacies of the game and give only casual concern to the extraneous happenings.

The question, "What is it in my nature that allows me to become totally absorbed?" is answered in the amount of creativity movement activities allow me to express. The total absorption in movement patterns is seen as a potential avenue for individuals to express themselves creatively. Humans have a need to express self and movement, and this is one avenue of expression. The combination of a person's movement and expression results in a creative product, a creative process, a creation of dancing, daring, laughing... much like blowing sunshine your way.

THE NATURE OF I





THE NATURE OF I

Figure 1

The I is defined,  
It does not flutter like the leaves in the wind  
or the words or one who is unsure.  
Yet the I remains open.

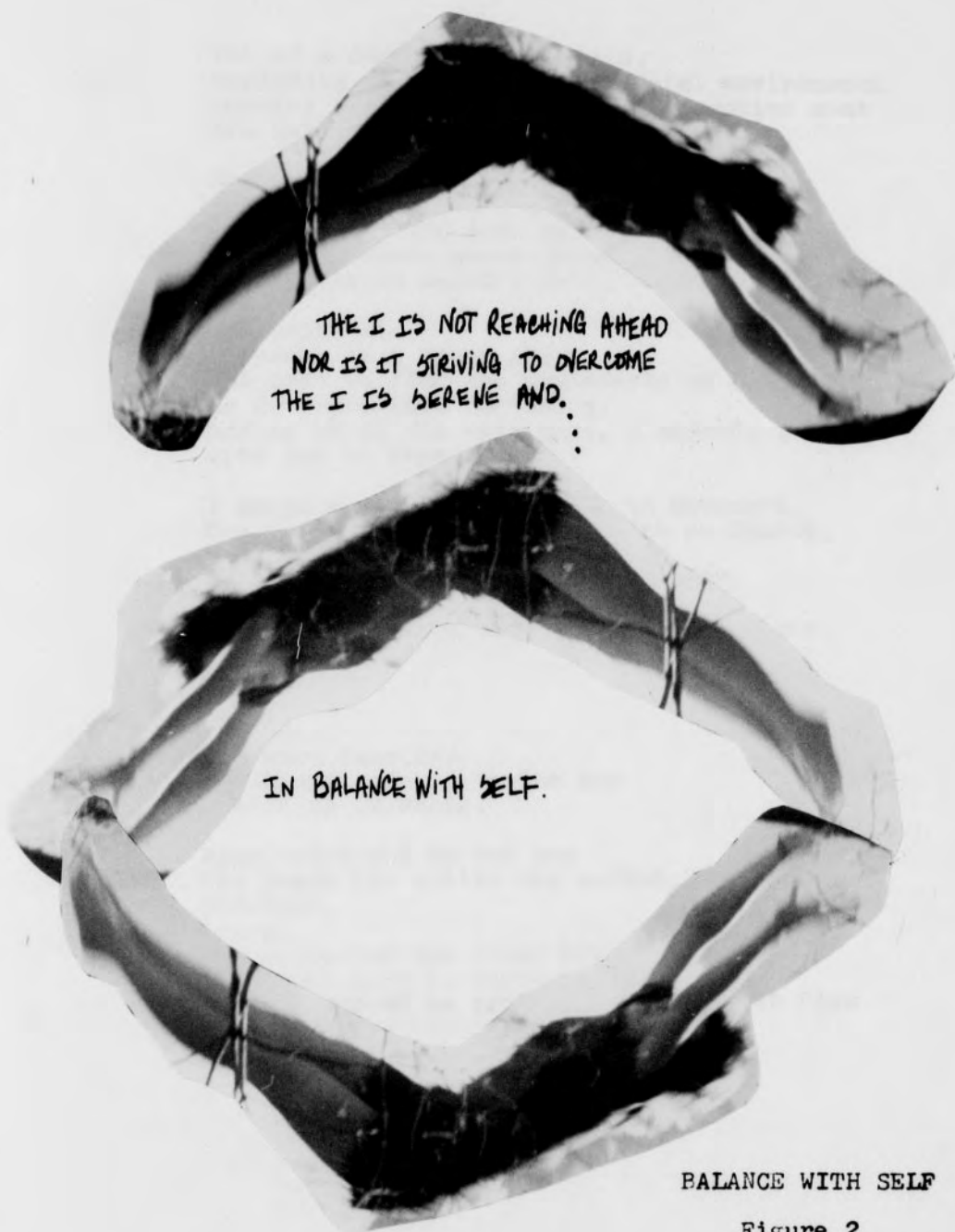
The I is concentration.  
It allows no ambivalence  
no deviations from the moment.  
Yet the I allows for dreaming.

The I is not absolute.  
Your I and my I does not exist  
nor is there an universal I.  
Yet the I is complete.

The I is not A product  
and the I is not A process.  
Yet the I is both product and process.

The I is single, yet many.  
The I is the eye of self.





BALANCE WITH SELF

Figure 2

# THE SELF MAGNIFICENT

Out of a dark enclosed world,  
exploding from a nine-month fetal environment  
pushing forth and away from its captive womb  
the Self Magnificent.

Extraordinarily it grows,  
adding a little each day.  
The color of the eyes soon change,  
and the wonders never cease,  
as the inches magnify self.

The self, in  
response to a touch grows  
and soon we find the trademarks of a person  
as we trace each beginning.  
Adding on as the days pass, a miracle is born  
from now to forever.

I watch as a miracle occurs in movement.  
The grace is set in a rage with no limits,  
and the tiny details stand out  
as the performer competes with self.  
A wonder,  
a joy to see such beauty that is complete.

The hands,  
the arms,  
the legs,  
all move together  
but apart, etched in the sky  
a picture is whole.

Many watch and do not see  
the years the artist has worked,  
strained,  
tried,  
and perfected the final touch,  
the final move to perfection.  
It is a marvel to capture and still let flow  
the motion,  
the movement of self.

## THE ACHIEVEMENT OF I

The means by which an "I" state of being can be achieved may be viewed through the phenomenon of human movement.

The staging or achieving of "I" is not a simple task. One must want to achieve this state of being. This can be difficult in terms of being able to put aside work duties. In an era where the puritan ethic is still in effect it becomes difficult to let the dishes or paper work sit while engaging in movement activities. One must be able to accept human movement as a desirable asset. All of the "everydayness," necessities, official roles, self-deceptions, and "its" that individuals encounter must be of low priority compared to human movement. Thus, the first stage of the achievement of "I" is initiated when movement is accepted as a positive value, and it is granted priority over the necessities, official roles, "everydayness", self-deceptions, and "its."

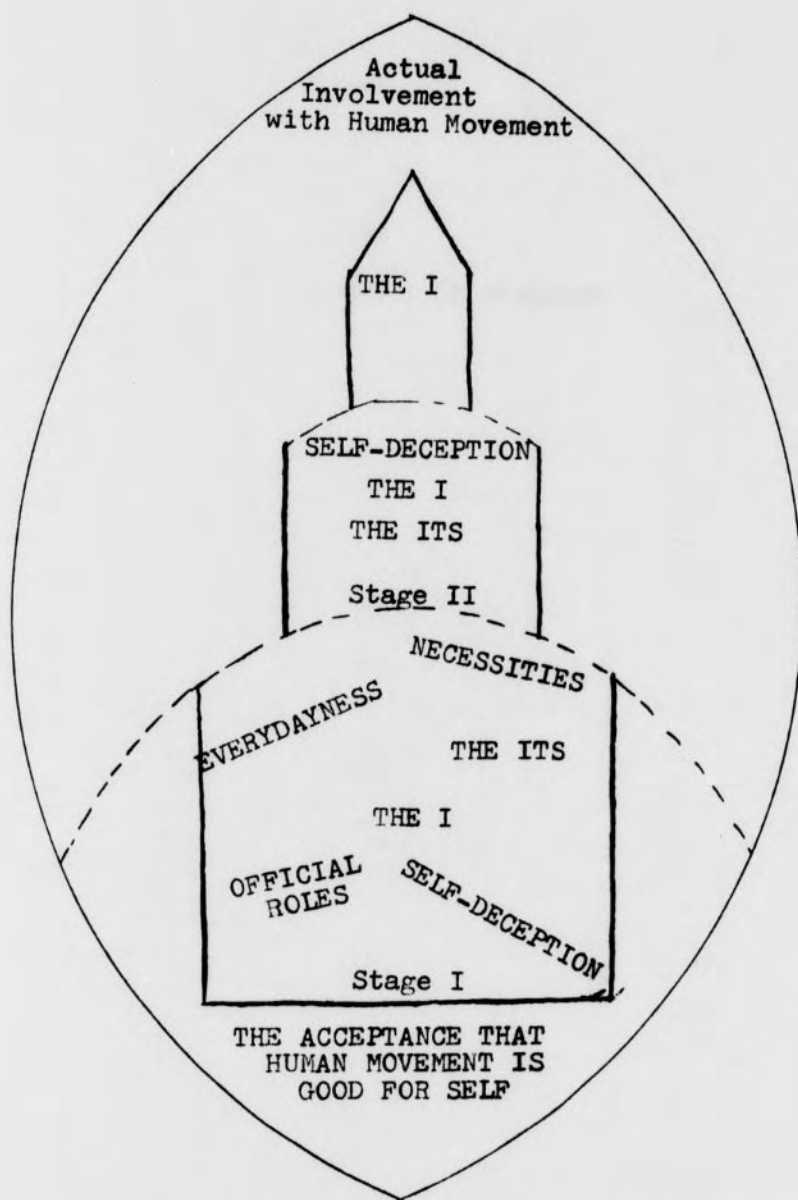
After the abandonment of the "everydayness", necessities and official roles is accomplished, the belief in the importance or value of human movement is put to test. As you are engaged in movement activities, can you put aside those thoughts of "I really shouldn't be out here", or all of the "Its" of menial tasks and meetings that add up in a day's time? It is difficult because culturally individuals are engrained with noble ideas regarding work.

The "Its" are sources of frustrations which are difficult to ignore and even more difficult to cast aside. At this stage the nagging thoughts of "I have so much to do" must be ignored. Once one is involved in movement an individual must allow movement forms to be first priority. Once this is accomplished the "I" state of movement will have been achieved without the individual's knowledge, for there will have been concentration on the movement activities and patterns.

The "I" of movement is a state in which one is utterly, completely, and totally absorbed in human movement. It is descriptive in subjective terms yet its ecstasy defies articulation. The I of Movement is a joyful, creative cry of I am....

## DEFINITION OF TERMS USED IN FIGURE

Everydayness:	Events which are commonalities in an individual's day.
Necessities:	Things which must be accomplished in a relatively short period of time.
Official Roles:	A posture in which a formal stance or position is assumed.
Self-Deception:	The practice of deceiving or being untrue with yourself.
The Its:	People or things which are not significant to an individual.
Self:	The total organism.
The I:	An aspect of the self which is naked in terms of defenses and allows an individual to become completely absorbed in joy.
Movement:	Human motor patterns under volition of the individual.



THE STAGING OF THE I THROUGH MOVEMENT

Figure 3

## THE I OF MOVEMENT





I  
AFTER A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF ALONENESS  
HAVE REACHED FORWARD ONLY TO FIND  
THAT I AM NO LONGER REACHING  
FOR I  
AM I.

NO LONGER REACHING

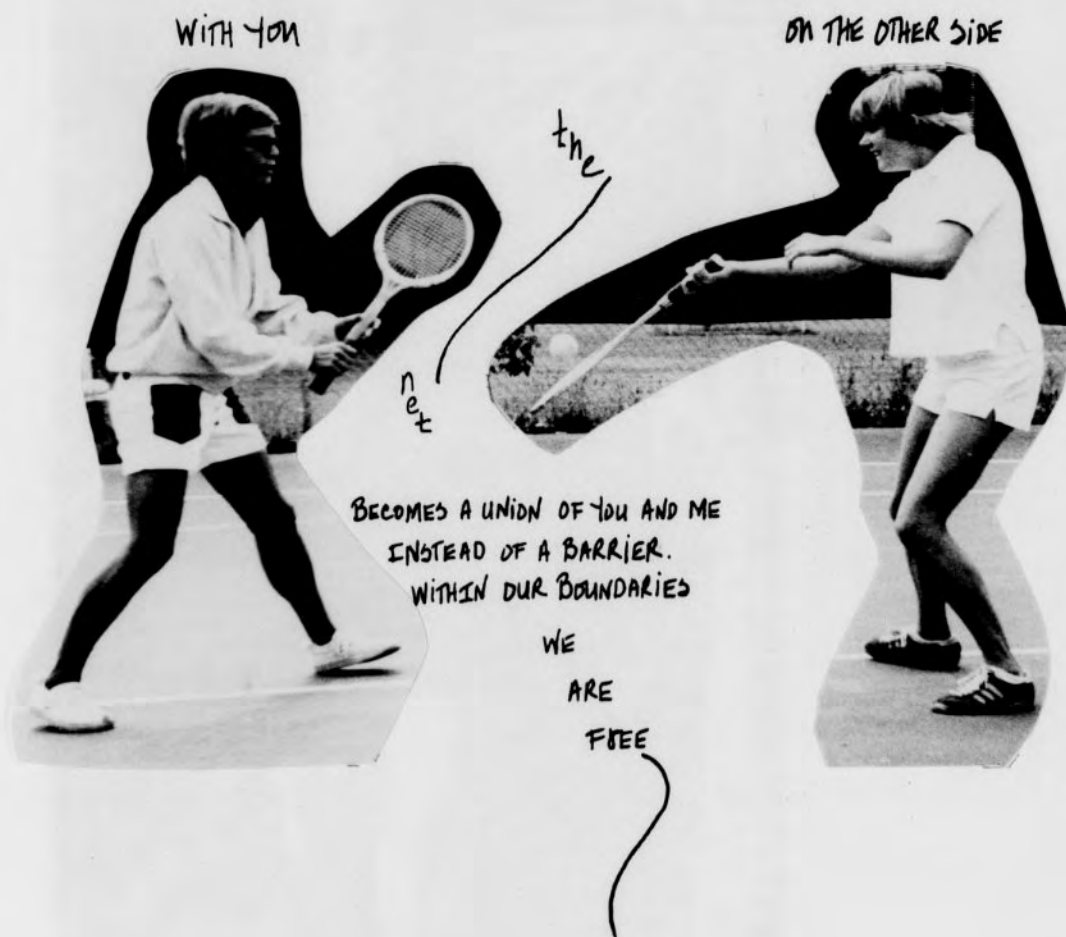
Figure 4



IN MY JOYOUS BEING  
 I LAND QUITE LIGHTLY  
 HOPING TO GIVE THE ABUNDANCE OF DANCING  
 TO ALL THE DEVILS' ADVOCATES THAT DO NOT KNOW  
 THE AGGREGATE OF ANGELS THAT DANCE UPON THE HEAD OF A PIN.

HOW MANY ANGELS CAN DANCE UPON THE HEAD OF A PIN?

Figure 5



THE NET

Figure 6



MY ACTIONS UNITE WITH MY THOUGHTS  
AND I BEGIN TO RUN.  
I NO LONGER NEED KEEP THEM CONTROLLED  
FOR IN MY POWER, STRENGTH AND ENDURANCE  
I WILL FINISH BALANCED  
AND MORE FULLY I.

MORE FULLY I

Figure 7



IN OUR PATH  
SO CLEARLY KNOWN TO BE GOING SOMEWHERE  
I RUN  
WITH A DESTINY OF DREAMS.

IN OUR PATH

Figure 8



NOW  
I AM THE BALL  
THE BAT  
I AM ME

MY ARMS  
MY LEGS  
MY EYES  
MY HOPES  
LET ME DREAM...

BUT MOST OF ALL  
THEY LET ME BE  
CASEY  
AT  
THE  
BAT.

CASEY AT THE BAT

Figure 9

## FULLY SPONTANEOUS

I AM WINGS, WATER AND WIND.  
 I AM A STAR, A SATIN TOUCH, A SYMPHONY,  
 I AM GLITTERING, SPARKLING, GLOWING, GROWING, BEING,  
 I STRETCH, TURN, TWIST, LEAP, BALANCE.  
 I AM A DANCING DUEL OF DEVIL AND ANGEL,  
 A SUGARY, INSATIABLE, SAVORY DELIGHT,  
 A WARM RUSHING WONDERFULLY WILD WAVE,  
 I AM A LAUGHING, LIKING, LALITY, LOOSE LOVE,  
 I AM A RARE, SELECTIVE, SOFT, FURRY CAREFULLY CARRIED DAY,  
 A LION, A LEOPARD, A COUGAR, A GAZELLE, AN EAGLE.  
 I AM AN AFFINITY FOR FLOWING ENDLESSLY,  
 I AM MISTY, MAGICAL, MYSTERIOUS.  
 I AM PRECIOUS, POSITIVE, PERILOUS MOMENTS,  
 I AM ...

I AM...

I AM...

MOVEMENT

FULLY SPONTANEOUS

Figure 10



THE GAME I AM

Figure 11



## CHAPTER V

THE INVESTIGATOR'S INQUIRY INTO THE NATURE OF THE GAME

## THE GAME

BEYOND A DOUBT  
I AM THE GAME I PLAY.  
I DO NOT WONDER WHETHER TOMORROW SHALL BE  
OR WHAT TODAY HAS BEEN.

MY ARM BECOMES A RACQUET LONGER  
MY REACH A BALL TOSS HIGHER  
I AM HERE,  
THOROUGHLY  
WITHIN THE GAME  
I AM.

## CHAPTER V

## SUMMARY, FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## SUMMARY

This study was a philosophical inquiry into one aspect of human movement using Heideggerian phenomenology as the method of inquiry. The problem was to depict those moments when individuals are voluntarily involved in movement patterns and activities in several different situations. These moments were then subjected to analysis by the investigator to discover any element common in all the situations. The investigator then probed further to understand why this common element appeared consistently by asking the questions:

1. What is it within mankind's nature that allows an individual to become totally absorbed in movement activities or as termed by the author, "The I of Movement?"
2. What is the nature of I?
3. How does one achieve the I?
4. What is the I state of moment like?

Photographs and poetry, prose, and verse were used to describe the investigator's inquiries. The investigator

used photography to describe her experiences and inquiries regarding human movement. The feelings and ideas of the individuals who appeared in the photographs are their own and no attempt was made to ascertain what they were. It was noted that although the descriptions and analyses presented were those of the author, it is possible for generalizations to be made which support inquiry into subsequent questions. The questions elaborating on the common element of total absorption were addressed and the question, "What is it within my nature that allows me to become absorbed in movement activities?" was probed. The answers to the questions were posed in the forms of photography, poetry, prose and verse and were structured through the creative process.

#### FINDINGS

The assumptions of the study were supported by the following:

1. The phenomenological method espoused by Martin Heidegger was developed and re-affirmed by the establishment of a common element in various movement activities, and patterns.
2. The concept of total absorption in a movement pattern or activity was realized in various movement situations which was not apparent prior to the phenomenological inquiry.

3. Photography, poetry, prose, and verse elicited feelings which were recorded to communicate the feelings of the author and to suggest answers to the nature, state, and achievement of "I."

#### CONCLUSION

Based on the experience of this study, it was concluded that it is possible to discern a common element within movement activities and patterns using a phenomenological approach, and it is possible to utilize sensory input to communicate feelings about the I of movement.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

The following suggestions for further study evolved in question form as the author was describing, interpreting, and re-describing movement activities, and patterns.

1. Is it possible to use another individual's phenomenological method and deduce the same common element?
2. Could another individual who has experienced a wide range of movement activities view the pictures the author described and arrive at a similar common element?
3. Could individuals who have not experienced a wide range of movement activities view the pictures the author described and arrive at a similar common element?
4. Is there a specific age range in which individuals are more absorbed in movement activities than another age range?

5. Could an in-depth subjective analysis be drawn from the movement activities and then be significantly correlated with an indicator of personality traits?
6. Could other individuals indicate movement activities that provide an avenue for creative or self-expression?
7. Are an individual's personality characteristics in movement activities parallel to those in daily living?
8. Do physical educators encourage creativity in the human movement phenomenon?

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